(c) insertion of a new section 164 A in Cr. PC to make it mandatory for recording of evidence of material witness(es) by Magistrate in an offence punishable with death or imprisonment for 07 years or more.

Appointment of special envoy to deal with Naxal violence

*159. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have evolved a proposal to appoint a Special Envoy to deal with different States on naxalite violence;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that this Special Envoy will try to bring diverse factions involved in naxalite violence to the conference table;

(c) the details of the role of Government in evolving a nation-wide formula for talks with various naxalite outfits;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government had also discussed this matter with the Andhra Pradesh Government; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) A Conference of Chief Ministers of naxalite affected States including Andhra Pradesh was convened by the Central Government at Hyderabad on 21.9.2004 to discuss *inter-alia* the issue of holding peace dialogue with the naxalite groups. During the Conference, the following was agreed to:

(i) If in its assessment a State finds the conditions conducive, it may hold peace talks with the naxal groups.

(ii) During the period of peace dialogue, the State would continue to perform its legal duties to protect the lives and property of all

citizens and step up presence of the State Government machinery in the affected areas.

(iii) The States should consult each other, pursue a coordinated approach and conduct peace dialogue in a manner that it does not impact the other States adversely.

(iv) The States should modernize their police forces and improve intelligence gathering and sharing mechanisms to take sustained and effective police action, wherever the possibility of a peace dialogue does not exist.

FTA among Asian countries

*160. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any possibility of Free Trade Agreement materialising among Asian countries; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) what is likely to be the impact of this agreement on the automobile industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The Government of India has signed the South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA) Agreement comprising SAARC members, Framework Agreement with Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), Framework Agreement for Bay of Bengal Initiative Multisectoral Technical & Economic Cooperation Free Trade Agreement (BIMSTEC FTA), Bilateral CECA with Singapore, Bilateral Free Trade Agreements with Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka, and is negotiating bilateral CECA with few other Asian countries. However, at present, there is no move for entering into a single Free Trade Agreement among all Asian Countries.